



# NEWS RELEASE

MAYOR CHRIS BEUTLER



LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

3140 N Street, Lincoln NE 68510 • Phone: 441-8000

Fax: 441-6229

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** October 26, 2010  
**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Julie Anderson, 414-8071  
Brian Baker, 441-8046

## **Halloween Doesn't Have to be a Dangerous Night for Children**

On a potentially dangerous night for child pedestrians, Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County urges parents to prepare children to act safely and drivers to take extra precautions. On average, twice as many children are killed while walking on Halloween, compared to other days of the year.

“Kids need proper safety instruction before they go out trick-or-treating,” says Julie Anderson with Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County. “Many will be out while it is dark and thus more difficult for drivers to see them. There are several simple and effective behaviors that parents can share with kids to help reduce their risk or injury. For example, children younger than age 12 should have adult supervision to cross streets. If older children are mature enough to trick-or-treat without adult supervision, parents should make sure they go in a group and stick to a predetermined route with good lighting.”

In preparation for Halloween, Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County will team up with Walk This Way program sponsor FedEx to provide kids with reflective materials to promote visibility, including trick-or-treat bags and zipper tags that can be attached to costumes, as well as important safety information to children, parents, and drivers. **These items are available in the lobby of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, 3140 ‘N’ Street, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Monday, October 25<sup>th</sup> through Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup>.**

Drivers need to be very alert as there will be more children on the streets and sidewalks who may be more focused on gathering candy and the excitement of the holiday than on crossing streets safely. “Safe Kids and FedEx urge drivers to slow down on neighborhood roads to make Halloween more enjoyable for everyone, but also to help save lives,” added Anderson.

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Top safety tips Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County recommends for parents:

- Cross the street safely at corners, **using traffic signals and crosswalks. Look left, right, and left again when crossing and keep looking as you cross. Walk, don't run, across the street.**
- Walk on sidewalks or paths. **If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible. Children should walk on direct routes with the fewest street crossings.**
- Slow down and stay alert - **watch out for cars that are turning or backing up and never dart out into the street or cross in between parked cars.**
- Costumes can be both creative and safe. **Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors. Masks can obstruct a child's vision, so choose non-toxic face paint and make-up whenever possible instead. Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights in order to see better, as well as be seen by drivers.**

Top safety tips Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County and FedEx recommend for drivers:

- Slow down **in residential neighborhoods and school zones. Remember that popular trick-or-treating hours are 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.**
- Be especially alert **and take extra time to look for kids at intersections, on medians, and on curbs. Children are excited on Halloween and may move in unpredictable ways.**
- Slowly and carefully **enter and exit driveways and alleys.**
- Reduce any distractions **inside your car, such as talking on the phone or eating, so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings.**

While pedestrian safety is a main concern on Halloween, parents and kids should also be careful when dealing with candy. "While kids never want to wait to dive into their candy, it is best to check sweets for signs of tampering before children are allowed to eat them," says Anderson. "Remind children to only eat treats in original and unopened wrappers."

In 1999, Safe Kids Worldwide and program sponsor Fed Ex created the Safe Kids Walk This Way program in the United States to teach safe behaviors to motorists and child pedestrians and create safer, more walkable communities. Every day, more than 75,000 FedEx vehicles are on the road, sharing the streets with pedestrians, fueling the company's dedication to pedestrian safety and sharing the lessons of safe driving that FedEx has learned over the past 35 years. Over the past 11 years, the program has expanded to include Brazil, Canada, China, India, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines where it has educated more than 4 million children.

For more tips on how to help kids become safer pedestrians on Halloween, as well as throughout the year, visit [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).

About Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County:

Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County works to prevent unintentional childhood injury, the leading cause of death and disability to Lancaster County children ages 1 to 14. Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing unintentional injury. Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County was founded in 1996, has membership representing 40 public and private organizations, and is led by the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department.